

To: Stanislaus, Mathy[Stanislaus.Mathy@epa.gov]; Harrison, Melissa[Harrison.Melissa@epa.gov]; Ruhl, Christopher[Ruhl.Christopher@epa.gov]; Zito, Kelly[ZITO.KELLY@EPA.GOV]; Ostrander, David[Ostrander.David@epa.gov]
Cc: Grantham, Nancy[Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov]; Levine, Carolyn[Levine.Carolyn@epa.gov]; Deitz, Randy[Deitz.Randy@epa.gov]; Breen, Barry[Breen.Barry@epa.gov]
From: Grantham, Nancy
Sent: Sun 9/6/2015 6:51:46 PM
Subject: August 7 update on GKM website -- fyi

Note: there is no mention of navajo nation in this first item

•□□□□□□□

•□□□□□□□

•□□□□□□□

•□□□□□□□ On August 5, 2015, EPA was conducting an investigation of the Gold King Mine. The intent of the investigation was to assess the on-going water releases from the mine and to treat mine water and to assess the feasibility of further mine remediation. The plan was to excavate the loose material that had collapsed into the cave entry back to the timbering. During the excavation, the loose material gave way, opening the adit (mine tunnel) and spilling the water stored behind the collapsed material into Cement Creek, a tributary of the Animas River.

Initial estimates are that the release contained approximately one million gallons of water (estimated from the dimensions of the mine adit) that was held behind unconsolidated debris near an abandoned mine portal. There were several workers at the site at the time of the breach, all were unharmed.

The large pulse of water dissipated in about an hour. Today the water in Cement Creek and the Animas River in Silverton is clearing. The adit is still discharging lower flows into Cement Creek. Today, EPA is rebuilding settling ponds to treat these flows – the upper pond will be completed by early afternoon, and the lower pond by COB or early tomorrow. EPA will treat the mine water diverted to the ponds with caustic soda and flocculent once the ponds are built.

We expect conditions will continue to improve in the coming hours and days. As of 10 a.m. today the leading edge of the plume was at 8 miles, as the crow flies (not river miles), from the New Mexico state line. We expect an update on that location later this afternoon. We will continue to coordinate with local, state, tribal and federal officials.

EPA's ASPECT (Airborne Spectral Photometric Environmental Collection Technology) arrived in Santa Fe, New Mexico, last evening to fuel up, and completed a preliminary overflight to determine how far downstream the release has gotten. The flight crew flew this morning from the New Mexico border to the mine to take photographs. The flight crew will fly the river again this afternoon.

EPA is coordinating with ATSDR in response to public health concerns/questions associated with the mine waste plume. ATSDR has been in communication with local health officials at San Juan Basin Health in La Plata County (Durango) and the San Juan County Health Department in Silverton, Colorado. Public health questions/concerns should be directed to Chris Poulet, ATSDR/R8 at 303-312-7013.

EPA Region 8 has been coordinating with Region 6 and Region 9 and the states of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and the Southern Ute tribe. Region 6 is working closely with the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) to evaluate possible impacts in New Mexico. Potentially impacted water systems have been notified and precautions are in place to ensure drinking water in homes is protected. EPA and NMED are providing assistance to community water systems and closely monitoring the situation.

[Top of Page](#)

Related Updates

[Sampling data from Gold King Mine Response](#)

- [September 4, 2015: Gold King Mine data added](#)
- [September 3, 2015: Gold King Mine Videos](#)
- [September 2, 2015: Gold King Mine additional data added](#)
- [September 2, 2015: Gold King Mine data added](#)
- [August 31, 2015: EPA Update on Gold King Mine Response: Additional Data Results and Public Records](#)
- [August 31, 2015: Gold King Mine data added](#)
- [August 30, 2015: Gold King Mine data added](#)
- [August 29, 2015: EPA Update on Gold King Mine Response: San Juan River Data](#)
- [August 28, 2015: Sediment and Water data added](#)
- [August 28, 2015 - EPA Update on Gold King Mine Response: Navajo Nation, Additional Data, Public Records](#)
- [August 27, 2015: Sediment and water data from the San Juan River and Lake Powell.](#)

- [August 27, 2015 - EPA Releases Additional Data and Public Records on Gold King Mine Response](#)
- [August 26, 2015 - EPA Releases Internal Report on Gold King Mine Response](#)
- [8/23/2015 - EPA samples collected from along the Animas River](#)
- [8/22/2015 - Sampling locations along San Juan River and Lake Powell](#)
- [8/21/2015 - EPA Posts Gold King Mine File Documents](#)
- [8/21/2015 - Questions about Sunnyside Mine added to Frequent Questions](#)
- [8/19/2015 - Map showing sampling locations along the San Juan River and Lake Powell](#)
- [8/16/2015 - Photos related to Gold King Mine Response](#)
- [8/13/2015 - Audio of Administrator McCarthy's press conference, Farmington, NM](#)
- [8/12/2015 - Audio of Administrator McCarthy's press conference, Durango, CO](#)
- [8/12/2015 - Photos from Administrator McCarthy's trip to Durango, CO](#)
- [8/12/2015 - Administrator McCarthy's statement on ongoing fieldwork at mines](#)
- [8/11/2015 - EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy's remarks about Gold King Mine](#)

[Contact Us](#) to ask a question, provide feedback, or report a problem.

- [EPA Home](#)
- [Privacy and Security Notice](#)
- [Accessibility](#)

Last updated on September 4, 2015

- [Hotline](#)
- [News](#)

●□□□□□□□□ [Blog](#)

●□□□□□□□□ [Apps](#)

●□□□□□□□□ [Widgets](#)